THE CONNOISSEUR.

By Mr. *TOWN*,

CRITIC and CENSOR-GENERAL.

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THURSDAY, *February* 21, 1754.

Conjugium vocat, hoc prætexit nomine Culpam.

VIRG.

IT is with the utmoſt concern I have heard myſelf within this week paſt accuſed at ſeveral tea-tables of not being a man of my word. The female part of my readers exclaim againſt me for not having as yet paid my particular addreſſes to the Fair. "Who is this Mr. "TOWN? ſays one: where can the Creature live? He "has ſaid nothing yet of the dear *Burletta* girl!" Another wonders that I have not recommended to the ladies Mr. HOYLE's New *Calculation of Chances*; for underſtanding which, nothing more is required, we are told, than the *Firſt Principles of Arithmetic*; i. e. to know how to tell the pips, or ſet up one's game. But I find the whole ſex in general have expected from me ſome ſhrewd remarks upon the MARRIAGE-BILL. To oblige them in ſome

meaſure, I ſhall recommend to their notice the following Advertiſement.

To All whom it may concern,

The Reverend Mr. KEITH,

(*Who has had the honour to perform to ſeveral of our Nobility, Gentry and Others*)

Gives this Public NOTICE,

THAT he ſhall continue at his Chapel in *May-Fair* no longer than the preſent month. He will then ſet out on his progreſs through the principal Market Towns, where he will exhibit publicly, without loſs of time, any hour of the day or night. He will perform to no leſs than two perſons, and will wait on any Gentleman and Lady privately at their own houſes.

N. B. After the 25th of March he will be ready to attend Perſons of Quality, at a Minute's warning, to the other ſide the Tweed, where he will perform *according to Act of Parliament.*

*** We have no connexion with the Fleet-Parſons, or other Pretenders. Beware of Counterfeits. *Ego ſum ſolus.*

I MAY perhaps take a future opportunity of enlarging on this very important ſubject, the MARRIAGE-BILL; but ſhall at preſent oblige the ladies by celebrating an Order of Females lately ſprung up amongſt us, uſually diſtinguiſh'd by the denomination of DEMI-REPS;—a word not to be found in any of our Dictionaries.

THIS Order, which ſeems daily encreaſing upon us, was firſt inſtituted by ſome ladies eminent for their public ſpirit, with a view of raiſing their half of the ſpecies to a level with the other in the unbounded licence of their enjoyments. By this artifice the moſt open violation of modeſty takes the name of innocent freedom and gaiety; and as long as the laſt failing remains a ſecret, the lady's honour is ſpotleſs and untainted. In a word, a DEMI-REP is a lady whom every body thinks what no body chuſes to call her.

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IT is abſolutely neceſſary that every lady of this Order ſhould be married. Cuſtom has given a certain charm to wedlock, which changes the colour of our actions, and renders that behaviour not improper, which in a ſtate of celibacy would be accounted indecent and ſcandalous. As to the Promiſes made in marriage "to love, honour and "obey," cuſtom has made Them alſo merely ceremonial, and in fact as little binding as the wedding-ring, which may be put on or pulled off at pleaſure.

RELIGIOUS and political writers have both for different reaſons endeavoured to encourage frequent marriages: but this Order, if it maintains it's ground, will more certainly promote them. How inviting muſt ſuch a ſtate appear to a woman of ſpirit! An *Engliſh* wife with all the indiſcretions of a girl may aſſume more than the privileges of a woman, may trifle publicly with the beaux and ſmarts, introduce them to her toilette, and fix it as a certain rule in all her converſation and behaviour, that when once marriage has (in *Lucy*'s phraſe) "made an honeſt woman of "her," ſhe is intitled to all the licence of a courtezan.

I HAVE lately ſeen, with a good deal of compaſſion, a few forward maiden ladies inveſting themſelves with the dignities, and incroaching on the privileges of this Order. It may not be improper to caution them to recede in time. As their claim to theſe liberties is unwarranted by cuſtom, they will not retain that ambiguous reputation enjoyed by the DEMI-REPS, whoſe whole ſyſtem of conduct is founded on the baſis of matrimony. Every lady therefore, inclined to indulge herſelf in all thoſe little innocent freedoms, ſhould confine herſelf within the pale of matrimony, to elude cenſure, as inſolvent debtors avoid a jail, by lodging within the verge of the court.

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A DEMI-REP then muſt neceſſarily be married: nor is it eaſy for a lady to maintain ſo critical a character unleſs ſhe is a woman of faſhion. Titles and eſtate bear down all weak cenſures, and ſilence ſcandal and detraction. That good-breeding too, ſo inviolably preſerved among perſons of condition, is of infinite ſervice. This produces that delightful inſipidity ſo remarkable in perſons of quality, whoſe converſation flows with one even tenor, undiſturb'd by ſentiment, and unruffled by paſſion: inſomuch that huſbands and wives, brothers, ſiſters, couſins, and in ſhort the whole circle of kindred and acquaintance, can entertain the moſt thorough contempt and even hatred for each other, without tranſgreſſing the minuteſt article of good-breeding and civility. But thoſe females who want the advantages of birth and fortune, muſt be content to wrap themſelves up in their integrity; for the lower ſort are ſo notoriouſly deficient in the requiſites of politeneſs, that they would not fail to throw out the moſt cruel and bitter invectives againſt the pretty delinquents.

THE Great World will, I doubt not, return me thanks for thus keeping the *canaille* at a diſtance, and ſecuring to them a quiet poſſeſſion of their enjoyments. And here I cannot but obſerve how reſpectable an Order the DEMI-REPS compoſe, of which the lovely ſiſterhood muſt all be married, and almoſt all Right Honourable.

FOR this Order, among many other embelliſhments of modern life, we are indebted to the *French:* ſuch flippant gaiety is more agreeable to the genius of that nation. There is a native baſhfulneſs inherent in my countrywomen, which it is not eaſy to ſurmount: but our modern fine ladies, who take as much pains to poliſh their minds, as to adorn their perſons, have got over this obſtacle with incredible facility.

cility. They have ſo ſkillfully grafted the *French* genius for intrigue upon *Britiſh* beauty and liberty, that their conduct appears perfectly original. Though we muſt do the *French* the juſtice to allow, that when a lady of this airy diſpoſition viſits *Paris*, ſhe returns moſt wonderfully improved. Upon the whole, *France* appears the propereſt ſchool to inſtruct the ladies in the theory of their conduct, but *England*, and more eſpecially *London*, the moſt commodious place to put it in practice. In this town, indeed, a lady ſtudious of improvement may, in a very ſhort time, make a conſiderable proficiency by frequenting the ſeveral academies kept conſtantly open for her profit and inſtruction. The Card-tables and Maſquerades in particular have trained up ſome ladies to a ſurprizing eminence without the leaſt aſſiſtance from a foreign education.

It is obſerved, that the difference between the ſeveral ſpecies in the ſcale of beings is but juſt ſufficient to preſerve their diſtinction; the higheſt of one Order approaching ſo near to the loweſt of the other, that the gradation is hard to be determined; as the colours of the rainbow, thro' an infinite variety of ſhades, die away into each other imperceptibly. The Demi-Reps hold this intermediate ſtation in the characters of females between the modeſt women and the women of pleaſure; to both which they are in ſome meaſure connected, as they ſtand upon the utmoſt verge of reputation, and totter on the brink of infamy. It were therefore to be wiſhed, that the Ladies wore ſome ſymbol of their Order, or were diſtinguiſhed by ſome peculiar mode of dreſs. The *Romans* aſſigned different habits to perſons of different ages and ſtations; and I hope, that when the buſtle of the enſuing Election is over, the new Parliament will take this matter into conſideration, and oblige the ſe-

veral claſſes of females to diſtinguiſh themſelves by ſome external marks and badges of their principles.

'TILL ſome Act of this nature ſhall take place, I ſhall propoſe a method, by which every lady may exactly learn in what claſs ſhe may be reckoned. The world muſt know then, that my very good friend Mr. AYSCOUGH has at length, with infinite pains and ſtudy, conſtructed a Thermometer, upon which he has delineated, after the manner that the degrees of heat and cold are marked on the common ſort, the whole ſcale of female characters, from the moſt inviolable modeſty to the moſt abandoned impudence. It is of a commodious ſize to wear at a watch: the liquor within the tube is a chymical mixture, which being acted on by the circulation of the blood and animal ſpirits, will riſe and fall according to the deſires and affections of the wearer. He will very ſhortly publiſh a large aſſortment of them, to be ſold at his ſhop on *Ludgate-Hill:* and I flatter myſelf there are many women in *England*, who will be glad to purchaſe ſuch an effectual regulator of their paſſions. Every lady therefore may avail herſelf of the inſtructions of this pocket-monitor; a monitor who will give her the moſt profitable leſſons without the uſual impertinence of advice. It will be of equal efficacy if worn by the men: but I expect my friend will have but little of their cuſtom; for as the reputation of chaſtity is the utmoſt aim of a fine lady, to preſerve even that in a fine gentleman is accounted mean and unmanly.

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Printed for R. BALDWIN, at the *Roſe* in *Pater-noſter Row*; where Letters to the CONNOISSEUR are received.